THE

EVIDENCE;

OR,

Religious and Moral Gazette.

RELIGION AND MORALITY ARE THE BASIS OF HUMAN FELICITY.

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COMMUNCIATION.

For the EVIDENCE.

The life of Barnabas.

(Concluded)

IT is very certain that Paul afterwards was fully reconciled to John and esteemed him very highly and employed him as his companion in travel. He directs the church of Colosse to receive him, and declares that he, with others, had been his "fellow workmen unto the Kingdom of God." So great was his affection for him, that in his last hours, in full view of approaching death, when writing to Timothy and directing him to come to him shortly, he gives an honorable testimony of Mark, "That he was profitable to him for the ministry," and directs Timothy to 'take Mark and bring him with him" when he came to see him. In what manner Barnabas came to his end the scripture does not inform.

SEVERAL important considerations are brought into view by the short history above related.

1. THE wisdom of the great head of the church is eminently displayed in sending forth his ministers to propagate the gospel in company. While on earth he sent forth first the twelve apostles, and afterwards seventy others, "by two and two, to go before him and preach the gospel and open the way for his reception. After his ascension, the Holy Ghost, as we have noticed, gave a special direction that Paul and Barnabas should be separated to the work to which they were called of travelling abroad and spreading the gospel among the Gentiles.

THIS was an arduous undertaking, attended with labor, anxiety and danger. This would have a natural tendency to discourage those who were engaged in the work. Every one knows, that a friendly companion, at such a time, must be a great support and serve to raise the drooping spirits to action.

THIS is not the only benefit which a missionary derives from a fellow laborer. There are many cases which occur in the course of his travels in which the path of duty, under certain circumstances, is difficult to be ascertained, and in which he will be at a loss to know what is best to be done. In such cases the assistance of an able and pious brother must be of great use and tend to reflect light on the path of duty and prevent many steps being taken which

would be injurious to the cause of religion. This is a truth more sensibly felt and realized by those who have been called to perform the work of the ministry for a considerable time in newly settled countries, where they could have no assistance from their brethren in the ministry. In consequence of local circumstances, many cases would occur which were unknown in more thickly settled countries, where Christian churches were numerous and gospel ministers at hand. If the importance of sending forth missionaries in company to spread the gospel in an age and country where Christianity has been published and where its nominal belief is generally inculcated in early life, how much more important must it be in sending missionaries among the heathen, where the gospel had never been known and where it would have to combat not only the enmity and pride of the human heart, but also the prejudices of education and the force of example.

Perhaps in no cases is the declaration of the sacred writer more fully applicable than to the one under consideration. "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow; but not so to him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to lift him up. Again, if two lie together then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him, and a three fold cord is not quickly broken."

2. Great advantage to the cause of Christ is derived from the joint labors of gospel ministers in consequence of their different natural and acquired abilities.

Christian ministers, even the best of them, have different talents and different infirmities. These may greatly assist and correct each other. This appears to have been the case with Paul and Barnabas. Hence they were proper companions to travel with each other. Barnabas is said to have been a man of commanding venerable aspect, mild disposition and an insinuating address. This appears probable from the Barbarian calling him Jupiter, who was supposed by the heathen to be the father of the gods, the chief Deity. This honor was bestowed on him rather than on Paul, no doubt, in consequence of his majestic person, which with the heathen had great weight.

It also further appears probable from the apostles giving him the name of Barnabas, which signifies *a son of consolation*—he being eminently qualified by his soft and affectionate address to administer consolation to the broken hearted. Paul, on the other hand, was a man whose person was forbidding, yet was an able orator, a most profound reasoner, possessed of a most ardent zeal and unconquerable resolution.

This description appears just from the heathen stiling him Mercurius, who was considered the god of eloquence, and the messenger of the gods to men, as also from his enemies allowing the force of his writings, but despising his person. These different talents prepared them to act in concert with each other. Paul could meet the philosopher on his own ground and combat him with forcible arguments drawn from reason and the nature of things. He could attack the Jews with argument drawn from the Old Testament, and prove, from their own scriptures, that Jesus was the Christ predicted by their own

prophets. He could apply the most forcible arguments to the consciences of mankind and force conviction on the same.

Barnabas, on the other hand, by the mildness of his manners and softness of his address, could calm the passions of the ferocious and gain the attention of the self willed better than all the arguments of Paul.

Were sinners under deep distress of mind and wounded with the arrows of conviction, which were drinking up their spirits, Barnabas could administer the consolation of the gospel and gently lead them to him who is sent to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captive and the opening of the prison to them that are bound,

Again does Paul when abused by the high priest Ananias, in an abrupt manner, call him a "whited wall," so as to raise the indignation of the populace, receive from them a rebuke, and feel himself the importance of reflection and concession for what he had said, the mildness of Barnabas might check his impetuosity and teach him to be more on his guard in future.

Does Paul in his great zeal for the gospel make no allowance for the weakness of a young Christian or the failing of John whose sirname was Mark, but determine that every gospel minister should be possessed of the resolution and firmness of himself, the charitable temper of Barnabas was peculiarly calculated to temper the zeal of Paul and induce him not to judge others by himself, but remember that every Christian hath not the same gifts. On the other hand does Peter at Antioch for fear of offending the Jews, withdraw from the Christian Gentiles and refuse to eat with them, and the other Jews dissemble likewise insomuch that Barnabas, by the mildness of his temper and the fear of offending his brethren be carried away with their dissimulation, the firmness of Paul is alone able to stem the torrent and withstand Peter to the face, giving him a sharp reproof and convincing them all by irresistible arguments of their error and bringing them back to a sense of duty. Thus two missionaries of different tempers and gifts were well qualified to assist each other, and by their joint endeavors build up the interest of the Redeemer's kingdom.

3. By the history of Paul and Barnabas we obtain one evidence among many others of the honesty of the sacred writers, and consequently of the truth of what they wrote. Luke, who was the companion of Paul and friend of Barnabas and who wrote their history, has not disguised their failings, but faithfully recorded them, leaving them in writing; not barely for the perusal of their Christian brethren, but for the inspection of their enemies and to be read in future ages.

This we are certain no designing impostor would have done, but on the contrary, while he passed the highest encomiums on their virtues, he would carefully have concealed their failings; or if this was impossible to be done, he would have palliated their miscarriages.

The faithfulness with which the sacred writers record not only the failings of their best friends, but also their own, is a sure evidence of their veracity, and a sure proof that they acted under the influence of the Holy spirit and in support of that cause which they knew could

not fail, as it was the cause of God himself.

H.

COMMUNICATION.

For the EVIDNCE.

Solemn Reflections of a young man of twenty-one.

THE great era of action life commences! This eventful date declares the closing period of twenty-one and ushers in the beginning of qualified years. Emblem of that solemn date, when terrestial shadows vanish and substantial life begins!

TAKING a retrospect of my minority—what is the scene? Sad? Ah! how stamped with vanity. Like the evening clouded, but sometimes cheered with the alternate moonshine—I look back on the past and see—a desire sometimes predominating to live to the glory of God my Maker, though soon again the world and depravity—like an awful intervening cloud obstruct—the rising hope and again involve—in darkness. Anticipating the future, almost equal versatility alarms my growing fears and forebodes misfortunes, disease and death; and what is infinitely more dreadful—the possible disease and eventual death of my *soul*—for the mere *possibility* of being destitute of what alone can constitute my recommendation in eternity, the righteousness of Him who died for helpless guilty creatures like me, is cause sufficient for exertion and alarm.

THE world!—I have tried it. It is absolutely unsatisfying: And Heaven,—vast, unlimited eternity alone can fill this soul of mine.

SENSE! erroneous, wild, unsanctified, deluding, ministers to the soul, demands the full career of gratification. But gratification unrestrained and heedless, like exclusive worldly things, recoils and murders its own cause and object

IMMORTALITY! *O God!* how sweet the sound! Heaven!—bliss! *eternal bliss!*——Well then, may mine be a life like his "*who went aboul doing good*,"—as far as earth and mortal can imitate heaven and divinity.

LIKE the first opening of the Rose, niped by the bitter frost—I have seen the early years of life devoted to the cause of Baal, and robbed of all their valued worth by the chill blasts of improper excesses terminating in eventual ruin. I have seen the full vigor of riper years absorbed in entire mercenary pursuits, never awaked to more noble objects, till the dread fiat of Omnipotence thunders the terrific summons, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee!" And even old age, tottering beneath infirmity, I have seen callous as the hardened flint to the suggestions of heaven's monitor within.

THESE I have seen; felt the impulsive warning, and felt the sad delineaments of a worldly life. And is there nothing then on which poor, wretched, guilty man can stay his hopes and fix for joy and some solidity? Nothing but sin and its long—long retinue of miseries?

HE who knows my frame, and remembers I am but dust, gives me a solution of these enquiries and points me to futurity—and bids me indulge, as an antidote for calamity,

the surest anticipation of an inheritance in a better world,

THE pen of inspiration teaches me that he alone who gives to God and man his best disinterested exertions, has the evidence of an inward purity of soul (though once corrupt) that by successive sanctification will guide him triumphant above this mouldering, dying world—will *positively* conduct him to the scenes of permanent delight; "full above measure; lasting beyond bound:" Compared with which, "Eden itself appears a cheerless desart, and all earthly charms intolerable deformity."

THROUGH this wilderness world then, Jesus be my conductor,—earthly objects occupy but a secondary place in my affections, and a steady persevering faith elevate my soul in Supreme attachment to the *Most High God.*

H. W. B.

June 30, 1807.

On Evil Speaking.

Messrs. Editors-

ALTHOTGH I have read your useful publication from the beginning, I do not recollect to have seen any thing on the sin of speaking evil. A review of the tables of contents affixed to the different volumes satisfied me that no observations had been communicated on so common a sin. Having not long since witnessed the commission of this sin, it occurred to my mind, that a few observations might be useful, at least to awaken reflection in the bosoms of the wise, and save them from both the doing and the suffering of evil in this way.

To distinguish the sin under consideration from slander legally considered, let it be observed that it does by no means imply that malice and falsehood, constitute the nature of slander. It may be committed without any malicious designs, and in perfect consistence with the strictest veracity, although it sometimes is accompanied by the one or the other. It is nearly allied to slander and, in the downward way of sin, it is the step which is immediately succeeded by it.

EVIL speaking consists in making known the supposed sins and failings of others, without any good end.

THERE are instances which, not only justify but demand the exposure of the failings and sins of others, as far as we *know* them. Many of these occur. Their general character is this, where individuals or public good requires it. My neighbor is about to entrust his property in the hands of one whom I know to be a knave; the command, "love thy neighbor as thyself;" obliges me to apprize him of his danger as much as it would in the case of a blind man who is exposed to peril for want of sight. When summoned by the laws of the land to testify respecting particulars touching the character of any, the public good demands the truth without evasion or reserve. In these and such like instances, in which we expose the faults of others, we are far from being guilty of the crime of evil speaking. They are obviously distinguished from this sin by the end that is had in view. They have in view a good end, evil speaking has none that is good.

A REPORT injurious to the character of a neighbor hath reached us. It is believed, whether on sufficient grounds is needless to determine. Suppose it is accompanied with every testimony necessary to support its credibility. With the sincere belief of its truth we retail the rumor we have heard. It is made the subject of conversation with a friend or in the social circles, merely for the purpose of telling some new thing, or to afford matter for conversation, or which is worse, to gratify envy or malice. Those who have never heard, are informed; and those who know already join in expressions of surprise, of censure or of pretended pity. This is evil speaking.

IT is a sin of greater guilt than many are aware of. How far is such conduct from doing to others as we would they should do unto us! If we have been guilty of injuring our own character, we cannot be willing that any should mangle and open the wound afresh. You are a penitent and with a broken heart mourn over your sins, you are willing and desirous that others should know your fall and its circumstances, together with your repentance, that all may take warning and that, he that standeth may take heed lest he fall; but you are by no means willing to be the subject of careless conversation, still less of censorious and milicious animadversions. How far also is evil speaking from "the wisdom that is from above, and is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy!" How little does it savor of that charity, which thinketh no evil, and which when faith shall be lost in vision, and hope in enjoyment, shall never fail! To speak evil is inconsistent with the Christian character. Wherever it is found, it is to be considered as the ebullition of an impure heart, and whatever plausible appearance of religion may be found with such, they are destitute of the love of God. "If any among you seem to be religious," saith the apostle James, "and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, that man's religion is vain."

THIS consideration, that evil speaking is an evidence that the love of God is not within us, I am aware, has influence with the only who entertain a hope that the same mind is in them which was also in Christ Jesus. With others who have not the love of God within them it has no weight; a thousand delusions blind them against the odiousness of a spirit unreconciled to God—I would therefore observe further,

THAT in the practice of evil speaking, there is something that discovers a spirit under the influence of the foulest passions.

IN its most favorable light when nothing more than known truth is declared to expose the faults of others unnecessarily, it appears like taking a secret delight in traduction. To say, no harm is meant, is only acting the part of the fool "that casteth firebrands, arrows and death —and saith am not I in sport?" Madness indeed, that mangles and deals in death blows with a smiling face?

IF the defamation which is rep
ed by the evil speaker, is rec

ithout credible evidence of its uth, such evidence is sufficient fully to satisfy an unprejudiced mind; it discovers in a more striking light a strong desire to traduce. The heart must be bitter indeed which exposes the faults of others needlessly, but that exceeds in bitterness, which rests the charges of detraction on evidence that is insufficient to support them.

But if the slanderous rumor comes, from the mouth of falsehood and infamy, from the mouth of a lying enemy, or is attended with evidences of its falsehood, how base must be the spirit that receives and circulates it! Perhaps you believe the lie, although it comes from a suspicious and polluted source; this only proves the badness of your heart in receiving it, that it hath delight in that which is evil and is full of all malice and subtlety. And by receiving for truth that which is so obviously false, and giving currency to it in evil speaking, you become an accomplice with the first inventer of it; you make it your own, and cover yourself with all the blots that stain his character.

In every view that can be taken of evil speaking, a secret pleasure in detraction, a malicious and envious spirit are discoverable. And a temper more base than this, where can you find?

Should we consider the consequences of evil-speaking, as society and individuals are injured by it, the guilt of the crime is still enhanced. It wounds like the assassin, it stirs up enmity and resentment, it exposes to temptation that spirit which instead of thinking no evil, is ready to suspect all evil, and which instead of rejoicing in the truth rejoiceth in iniquity; and it breeds contentions and broils. Perhaps, however, enough hath been said to define the sin and expose its baseness.

To guard us against this sin, we are furnished with many precepts and examples in the gospel. Be ye holy in all manner of conversation ---Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles---Let your speech be always with grace seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man ---To him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God---Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh ---Keep thy tonge from evil and thy lips from speaking guile---Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of Judgment---Speak evil of no man---"I am purposed," saith David, "that my mouth shall not transgress---I will take heed to my ways, said he, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is with me." The apostle Paul, from being a persecutor exceedingly mad, become mild, and could in review of his life appeal to others and say, "ye are witnesses how holily, and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you"---and in one greater than David and greater than Paul, in our blessed Lord, we have the brightest example of a conversation always tending to some good ---Go and do likewise.

It is true, these precepts and examples are to many very unacceptable. The precepts are too rigid, and the examples unamiable. To maintain a constant guard over our very

words, and have them always ordered aright: to be watchful thatnot even an idle word escape our lips: ties the cords of restraints and bands of confinement, that are intollerabe to them, they say, "our lips are our own, who is Lord over us?" But to the heart that is reconciled unto God, to them who have in them the same mind which was also in Christ, the commandments are not grievous, nor the examples desp'sed. They desire to be conformed unto them. They pray for the enlargement of their hearts in the way of the divine commandments, and that they may have the spirit of Christ within, to walk in his steps. They crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, and exult in every conquest over sin in any form. They rejoice to walk according to the divine will in the gospel, and cheerfully exercise every kind of self-denial that is required. To these, to as many as walk according to the divine rule, we say, peace be on them, even on all the Israel of God---'Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge? Let him shew out of a good conversatibn his works with meekhess of wisdom."

A. B.

Evangelical Magazine.

Religious intelligence.

We are happy to have it our power to anuounce to our readers that religious awakenings are at this time, in many places, encreasing. In Delaware county the Lord is pouring out of his spirit in a remarkable manner. We have heretofore given a sketch respecting the work in Franklin. From this place the work has spread in all directions. In Walton, Meredith, and many other towns the ingathering of soul to Jesus is truly astonishing. Sinners are flocking to Christ and saints are rejoicing.

In Litchfield, Conn. in the society of which the Rev. Dan Huntington is minister, we are informed are striking exhibitions of Divine power and grace. It is said that a peculiar harmony is prevalent in this highly favored place.

WE have every motive to admire God in the displays of his sovereign grace, andto look to him for more copious outpourings of his spirit.

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